



FAXGRAM #2

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O.C.T.

September 2009

Ontario Teachers Receive New Professional Designation

We wanted to write to you personally to tell you about the new professional designation for Ontario teachers, a for Canadian educators.

Beginning this fall, OCT - which stands for Ontario Certified Teacher - will be awarded by the Council of the Ontario College of Teachers to members in good standing.

The designation signifies that you:

- **are certified and qualified to teach in Ontario's publicly funded schools**
- **possess distinct knowledge and skills specific to teaching**
- **engage in ongoing learning throughout your career**
- **belong to a community of highly educated, responsible and caring practitioners who are committed to helping Ontario students develop and succeed.**

It's an important distinction, one we hope you will use frequently in the months and years ahead.

Until now, teaching was one of the only self-regulated professions in the province without a professional designation. For example, we're all familiar with RN, CA, and PEng as designations for nurses, chartered accountants and engineers. The abbreviations become common fixtures in everyday language, symbolic of the professions and as respected titles for their practitioners.

OCT lets students, parents and the public know that you belong to a community of highly educated professionals, people whose professional practice is guided and informed by the profession's standards of practice and ethical standards.

At the request of College Council in 2007, we investigated the notion of professional designation. Over 16 months, through our annual member survey, focus groups and an extensive electronic poll designed and managed by expert firms outside the College, members told us they favoured having a professional designation.

Members wanted a tool to help raise the level of respect for teaching within the community. They wanted a symbol of personal, professional achievement. They wanted a moniker as testament to their distinct knowledge and skills and the respect, trust, care and integrity they demonstrate with their students, parents and each other.

OCT is that symbol.

We encourage you to use OCT in your professional correspondence and wherever you can to promote professionalism in teaching. See the Style Guide for Members in the [Member's Area](#) of the College web site for suggestions.

The one-time budget set aside to implement the professional designation is under \$100,000 and is being accommodated in the College's 2009 annual budget.

The professional designation will become part of the College's day-to-day business - for example, it will be included on annual certificates, which the College issues every year anyway. The designation will not cause an increase in member fees.

OCT is not a lifetime award. Only those who maintain their good standing with the College can use the designation. Those who resign, retire, fail to pay their membership fees, or whose teaching certificates have been revoked or suspended for disciplinary reasons are ineligible to use it.

You will not have to pass a test or complete additional qualifications to use the professional designation.

The College Council was very clear - as long as you maintain your membership in good standing, you will have the right to use OCT.

The designation becomes a public expression of something Ontario's educators have known all along: Teaching is a profession, noble in intent, life- and society-shaping in implementation.

We hope you make the most of it.

Sincerely,

Liz Papadopoulos, OCT
Chair of Council

Michael Salvatori, OCT
Registrar and CEO

For more information on the designation, visit www.oct.ca.

www.haltonoecta.com

PLEASE SHARE WITH ALL TEACHERS!